

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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FOUR FINALISTS SELECTED FOR COMMISSIONER POST

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – In a special-called meeting Thursday, the Kentucky Board of Education continued its discussion of candidates for the position of commissioner of education and narrowed the field to four finalists.

The four are:

- **Dennis W. Cheek, Ph.D.** – Cheek is currently senior fellow at the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation in Kansas City, Missouri, a position he has held since May 2009. Cheek's previous experience includes: vice president of education for the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation; vice president for Venture Philanthropy Innovation and managing director for Templeton Venture Philanthropy Associates at the John Templeton Foundation in Pennsylvania; senior consulting professional at the Science Applications International Corporation in Tennessee; director of the Office of High School Reform, Research and Adult Education at the Rhode Island Department of Education; project coordinator at the New York State Department of Education; and elementary, middle, high school and university teacher. He earned bachelor's degrees from Towson University and Excelsior College; a master's degree from University of Maryland Baltimore County; and doctorates from Pennsylvania State University and the University of Durham.
- **Terry Holliday, Ph.D.** – Holliday is currently superintendent of Iredell-Statesville Schools in Statesville, North Carolina, a position he has held since 2002. During his tenure, the school district received the 2008 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. Holliday's previous experience includes: superintendent of the Transylvania County school system in Brevard, North Carolina; associate superintendent and director of accountability for Rock Hill School District 3 in York County, South Carolina; principal, assistant principal and director of instrumental music for

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Fort Mill High School in Fort Mill, South Carolina; and band director at Northside Junior High, Parker High and Gaffney High in South Carolina. Holliday's work as a school administrator led to the closing of achievement gaps and marked improvement in graduation rates and other student achievement measures. He earned a bachelor's degree from Furman University; a master's degree and doctorate from Winthrop University; and a doctorate from the University of South Carolina.

- **Catherine Cross Maple, Ph.D.** – Maple is currently deputy cabinet secretary for the New Mexico Public Education Department, a position she has held since 2004. Maple's previous experience includes: assistant secretary for New Mexico Vocational Rehabilitation (a division of the New Mexico Public Education Department); strategic planning officer, director of Organizational Planning and Development and director of Student Support Services for Albuquerque Public Schools, New Mexico; CEO and executive director for the YWCA of Albuquerque; coordinator of Project Outreach for the University of New Mexico; and teacher for Washoe County Schools and the University of Nevada. She earned a bachelor's degree from Montana State University; a master's degree from the University of Nevada; and a doctorate from the University of New Mexico.
- **Michael Sentance** – Sentance most recently was the Secretary's Regional Representative at the U.S. Department of Education, a position he held from 2001 to January 2009. Sentance's previous experience includes: senior education advisor to the Governor of Massachusetts; Massachusetts secretary of education; director, Massachusetts Governor's Legislative Office; Massachusetts assistant attorney general; and legal counsel for the Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts. He earned a bachelor's degree from Georgetown University; a juris doctorate from the Duquesne University School of Law; and a master of laws degree from the Boston University School of Law.

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“The diversity of the pool of candidates for this position was excellent because of the extensive outreach,” said Kentucky Board of Education Chair Joe Brothers. “Narrowing the pool has been challenging, because the candidates represented many opportunities for leadership in Kentucky. We’ve selected these four based on their state and national education policy work, state and national recognition for their accomplishments in education, national foundation leadership, executive-level experience outside of education and work with executive and legislative branches of government. The board will continue its verification of credentials and research into all four candidates, and we look forward to meeting with them again next week.”

During the search, the board and Greenwood/Asher & Associates, Inc. made over 300 contacts, reviewed detailed information on approximately 80 individuals and interviewed 12 candidates. The board will meet with each finalist separately on July 8 in Frankfort.

The board welcomes public input on the four finalists. Comments may be made to any board member, in person or by telephone.

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